

President's Letter

Teresa Moreno

Greetings WAAC Members!

I don't know about all of you, but for me 2016 has already taken off at an extraordinary pace. My calendar is filling up fast with exhibit development, collections research, and professional workshops and conferences.

However, by far the one thing that I am looking forward to the most is the 2016 WAAC annual meeting and conference, which this year, I'm proud to say, will be held in my hometown of Tucson, Arizona! Mark your calendars for November 1-6 for a healthy dose of Sonoran Desert fall sunshine and culture and a taste of the Old Pueblo, designated UNESCO City of Gastronomy in 2015!

Before I elaborate on the developing plans for the annual meeting, I would like to congratulate out-going WAAC President Catherine "Cat" Coueignoux for a job extraordinarily well done! Cat organized a fabulous professional conference/ "summer camp for conservators" at Asilomar State Beach and Conference Grounds in Monterey Bay, CA. The event setting was truly a "refuge by the sea"! The talks were fascinating and informative, and the conference activities, which included roasting marshmallows at an evening bonfire, a movie night/pajama party, and a record breaking silent auction (sincere thanks to all who contributed!), all embodied the spirit of WAAC. The Angel's project, coordinated by Anne Getts and Geneva Griswold, was also a great success. Everything about last year's annual meeting was a hit! I certainly have my work cut out for me if I hope to match it. Thanks, Cat!

Of course, even with Cat's tremendous leadership, such a successful conference couldn't have happened without the concerted and ever reliable efforts of the entire board, secretary Denise Migail, treasurer and membership secretary Chris Stavroudis, members-at-large Sue Ann Chui, Susanne Friend, Yadin Larochette, and Sarah Melching, newsletter editor Carolyn Tallent, web editor Walter Henry, and publications fulfillments officer Donna Williams. Thank you all for your individual contributions over the course of the year that keep the organization rolling and help to facilitate the WAAC annual meeting.

In addition to saying adieu to Cat, we bid a fond farewell to out-going members-at-large, Sue Ann Chui and Yadin Larochette. It was a true pleasure getting to know and work with each of them, and they will be missed! On a happier note, we welcome in-coming members-at-large, Seth Irwin, paper conservator at the University of Hawaii Library at Mānoa, and Christina O'Connell, senior paintings conservator at the Huntington Library, Art Galleries, and Botanical Gardens. Both, I'm certain will bring great energy and keen ideas to the board!

I am also thrilled to welcome in-coming VP and new WAAC member Randy Silverman, head of preservation at the University of Utah's Marriott Library. While new to WAAC, Randy is not new to conservation or to the West! He brings with him over thirty years of experience in book conservation and working in the western U.S. Randy enthusiastically accepted the invitation to join WAAC and the nomination to run for VP. I very much look forward to working with him to further develop WAAC membership in the great state of Utah!

You may notice the coincidental common denominator amongst these new WAAC board members. They are all associated with libraries in one capacity or another. So, all of you book and paper people out there, take note! There is great potential for developing a theme for a future WAAC meeting around the preservation and conservation activities in libraries and archives. I think this would be fantastic, and I look forward to what may come!

I would also like to say a quick word about our last election. Having already welcomed our new board members, I congratulate them on their victories! I would also like to offer my sincerest gratitude to all the other candidates who ran. Thanks to the hard work of the nominating committee, which included Sue Ann Chui, Susanne Friend, Yadin Larochette, Sarah Melching and me, the

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President's letter, continued

membership was presented with a fantastic and diverse slate of candidates that resulted in a very tight election! We had reasonable voter turnout, but could strive to do better. With just over 100 e-ballots cast, this amounted to approximately 34% voter participation based on membership numbers at the time of the election.

Many thanks to Elizabeth Drolet, assistant conservator at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Laura Hartman, paintings conservator at the Dallas Museum of Art, Marilen Pool, conservator in private practice at Sonoran Art Conservation Services and project conservator for Arizona State Museum, and Dana Senge, objects conservator Western Archaeological and Conservation Center, for their willingness to run for member-at-large. Particularly special thanks go to Heidi Swierenga, objects conservator, University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver, Canada for her genuine interest and enthusiasm in running for VP and her suggestion to take the WAAC annual meeting and conference to a new international venue! I hope that we can revisit this possibility, and I strongly encourage Heidi and the other candidates to consider running again!

Likewise, on behalf of this year's nominating committee, I encourage all WAAC members to consider running for chance to serve on the WAAC board. If you are interested in running yourself, or if you have someone in mind who you would like to nominate, please contact Randy Silverman. Serving on the WAAC board is a wonderful and WAAC-y opportunity for professional development!

On the subject of WAAC membership, our numbers have not yet recovered to pre-recession levels. To ensure the continued quality, diversity, and strength of the organization, I ask that we all do our part to encourage our colleagues to become members or renew their memberships. Membership in WAAC is easy and affordable, especially now that registration and renewals can be done on-line.

Finally, this brings me back to the 2016 annual meeting and conference. The conference itself will be held in Tucson, November 1-4. By that time it will have been ten years since the last WAAC conference was hosted in Tucson by Laura Downey Staneff at the Center for Creative Photography on the University of Arizona Campus. I began my service on the WAAC board as secretary that year, so it seems only fitting that I bring the conference back to the U of A, my *alma mater*. This year's conference will be held in the Silver & Sage Room of Old Main, the original University building that opened in 1891 when Arizona was still a Territory! The historic structure was recently renovated and lovingly restored, and the essence of the old west is preserved in its architectural elements!

As you have probably noted, the date is little later in the year than usual for the WAAC meeting. This was done to try to avoid conflicts with the flurry of other local, national, and international conservation related conferences, but more importantly to avoid the oppressive late summer and early fall heat of the Sonoran Desert!

One other benefit of holding the meeting during this particular week is that it will immediately proceed what has become one of Tucson's most notable cultural events, the All Souls Procession Weekend! The All Souls Procession is a community celebration that honors our ancestors and deceased loved ones. Tucson has a rich Indigenous and Mexican heritage, and the All Souls Procession brings together the beliefs, customs, and traditions of the region from the past and the present. Be sure to plan on staying through the weekend of November 5-6 to experience this unique Tucson tradition!

The 2016 WAAC annual meeting and conference will be the perfect opportunity to combine great scholarship, participate in regional cultural activities, and explore all that Tucson and Southern Arizona have to offer! Save the date and watch this space for more information as details evolve!

Teresa (Terri)

Volume 38 Number 1 WAAC Newsletter

WAAC Newsletter (ISSN 1052-0066) is a publication of the nonprofit Western Association for Art Conservation (WAAC). It is published three times per year, in January, May, and September. WAAC Newsletter is printed on alkaline paper. Copyright 2016 Western Association for Art Conservation.

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Deadline

Contributions for the May Newsletter should be received by the Editor before **April 5, 2016**.